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Abraham Lincoln  
The Ideal Christian







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# Abraham Lincoln

## The Ideal Christian

By  
E. F. RUDEEN

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# Abraham Lincoln, the Ideal Christian

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To the teachings of Lincoln and his spirit of true Christian worldism, we must cling unswervingly if this government of ours is to endure as the great democratic nation of the earth. We are at the present time undergoing a critical test and it is the duty of all good citizenship to know Lincoln, to understand him, and to keep alive the fervent inspiration of justice and liberty he gave to the world.

Volumes have been written and much said about Lincoln the lawyer, Lincoln the citizen, Lincoln the story-teller, Lincoln the statesman, Lincoln the friend of man and other phases of his remarkable character, and while some attention has been given to his religious side, it has been comparatively meager, and has not received the prominence it deserves, for he was **\*Abraham Lincoln the ideal Christian**, and so he came from prairie cabin to capitol. One fair ideal led our chieftain on, forevermore he burned to do his deed with the fine stroke and gesture of a king. He built the rail pile as he built the state, pouring his splendid strength through every blow, the conscience of him testing every stroke to make his deed the measure of a man. So came the captain with the mighty heart, and when the step of earthquake shook the house, wresting

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\*For further information regarding Lincoln's religious faith, see William J. Johnson's "Abraham Lincoln the Christian."



the rafters from their ancient hold, he held the ridgepole up and spiked again the rafters of the home. He held his place; held on through blame and faltered not at praise, and when he fell in a whirlwind, he went down as when a kingly cedar green with boughs goes down with a great shout upon the hills and leaves a lonesome place against the sky.

Some years ago I happened to stroll into a salvation Army store and discovered, among a heap of old books that had been sent in to be sold to the poor, a beautifully bound volume entitled "The Story Life of Lincoln." I asked them the price of the book. They said Five cents. Of course I bought it, and as I read this book I was gripped with the thought of the strange comparison in the lives of the Savior of the world and the Savior of our country; so with this thought in mind, with the help of the Bible and this book, I prepared this composition entitled Abraham Lincoln, the Ideal Christian.

It is only natural for ambitious and wide awake people to have certain ideals to look up to and copy from, such as great statesmen, social and religious leaders. This is called "Hero worship" and is good and proper providing said ideals are Christ-like in character, because in Him we have the only absolutely perfect ideal; by the shedding of whose blood we are redeemed, and, in proportion as we measure up to His standard, to that proportion can we say as did St. Paul, "Be ye followers of me even as I am a follower of Christ."

It has been said of Abraham Lincoln, the humble backwoodsman who rose to be the world's greatest governor and emancipator, that he was the most perfect Christian ideal outside of Bible characters. Too often our



great leaders limit themselves to a certain nation or race, but this cannot be said of the two characters from whom we will try and draw some delightful and interesting comparisons.

Jesus was a Jew, but more than a Jew; Lincoln was an American, but more than an American. They were what the Bible calls "true Israelites" and that includes all people who worship Abraham's God, regardless of nationality or color.

Lincoln resembled his Master not only in Spirit and personality, but the events of their lives were strikingly parallel. I say Lincoln resembled his Master. I repeat this because I do not want it thought that I am trying to put him on a par with our Savior.

To start with; they were of very humble birth. Jesus, as we all know, was born in Bethlehem's stable; Lincoln was born in a very humble log cabin. His cousin Dennis Hanks tells of Nancy's baby boy in these words:

"Tom and Nancy lived on a farm about two miles from us, where Abe was born. I ricollect Tom comin' over to our house one cold mornin' in Feb'ruary and sayin' kind o' slow, 'Nancy's got a boy baby.'

"Mother got flustered an' hurried up 'er work to go over to look after the little feller, but I didn't have nothin' to wait fur, so I cut an' run the hull two mile to see my new cousin.

"You bet I was tickled to death. Babies wasn't as common as blackberries in the woods o' Kentucky. Mother come over and washed him an' put a yaller flannel petticoat on him, an' cooked some dried berries with wild honey fur Nancy, an' slicked things up an' went home. An' that's all the nuss'n either of 'em got. . . .

"I rolled up in a b'ar skin an' slep' by the



fire-place that night, so's I could see the little feller when he cried and Tom had to get up an' tend him. Nancy let me hold him purty soon. Folks often ask me if Abe was a good-looking baby. Well, now, he looked just like any other baby, at fust—like red cherry pulp squeezed dry. An' he didn't improve none as he growed older. Abe never was much fur looks. I ricollect how Tom joked about Abe's long legs when he was toddlin' 'round the cabin. He growed out o' his clothes fastern's Nancy could make 'em."

All that the Bible says concerning Jesus between the age of twelve and thirty is that he increased in stature and wisdom and in the favor of God and man. This also applies to Lincoln. He increased in stature. Before he was twenty years of age he had reached his full height of six feet four inches. He also increased in wisdom. Although his schooling did not amount to as much as one year all told, yet he read and mastered all the books of value he could secure, using the Bible as his chief text book, and of that book he said, "Take all of the Bible upon reason that you can, and the balance upon faith, and you will live and die a better and happier man." But much of his learning was obtained in the University of Hard Knocks.

He was a favorite among his fellow-men on account of the feats of his superior physical strength and good humor, and his lofty character and childlike faith merited the favor of God. Now as regards to their personal appearance. There is no authentic likeness of Jesus on record. The pictures that we see of Him are only the result of some painter's imagination, who often represent Him as a very handsome and effeminate person. But according to the Bible He



resembled Lincoln in personal appearance; for Isaiah says, He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him. But there were times when their charming personalities transfigured them into real beauty. We read of Jesus taking His disciples up into a mountain to pray, and as he prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered and His garments become white and glistening. We have the testimony of a man who was present at the Cooper Institute, New York City, when Lincoln delivered that great speech against slavery, and he tells of his transfiguration.

"When Lincoln rose to speak" he says, "I was greatly disappointed. He was tall, tall—oh, how tall!—and so angular and awkward that I had, for an instant, a feeling of pity for so ungainly a man. His clothes were black and ill-fitting, badly wrinkled—as if they had been jammed carelessly into a small trunk. His bushy head, with stiff black hair thrown back, was balanced on a long and lean headstalk, and when he raised his hands in an opening gesture, I noticed that they were very large. He began in a low tone of voice—as if he were used to speaking outdoors, and was afraid of speaking too loudly. He said, 'Mr. Cheerman' instead of 'Mr. Chairman' and employed many other words with an old-fashioned pronunciation. I said to myself:

"'Old fellow, you won't do; it's all very well for the wild west, but this will never go down in New York.'

"But pretty soon he began to get into his subject; he straightened up, made regular and graceful gestures; his face lighted as with an inward fire; the whole man was **transfigured**. I forgot his clothes, his personal appearance, his individual peculiari-



ties. Presently forgetting myself, I was on my feet with the rest, yelling like a wild Indian, cheering this wonderful man. In the closing parts of his arumgent, you could hear the gentle sizzling of the gas burners. When he reached a climax the thunders of applause were terrific. It was a great speech.

"When I came out of the hall, my face glowing with excitement and my frame all aquiver, a friend with his eyes aglow asked me what I thought of Abe Lincoln, the rail-splitter. I said:

"He's the greatest man since St. Paul. And I think so yet."

Their occupation before entering public life was the same. Jesus was a carpenter; Lincoln was sometimes called a carpenter on account of building flat boats, but the title of rail-splitter is associated with his name even to this day. Their method of teaching was the same, as they could reveal great truths by the telling of simple stories. The Bible says that Jesus taught chiefly by parables (or stories); Lincoln was called "the champion story teller of the Capital." They encouraged the art of debate by making it clean that a person who believes in the theory he teaches is anxious to defend the same by debate. As the Bible says, "Be ready to give to every man who asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. Only those who advocate a false theory refuse to discuss the same for fear their falsehood be brought to light, as the pro-slavery people of Lincoln's time who taught that slavery was of divine origin. This was taught in most of the churches of the South, also many in the North. But Lincoln said that slavery was hellish and challenged to debate the subject with his opponents. The challenge was reluctantly accepted which result-



ed in the celebrated Douglas and Lincoln debates. These debates had their good effect as they gave the people an opportunity to hear both sides of the question and decide for themselves.

These two Godly men did not belong to any earthly religious organization, because of the many man-made forms that the members were required to comply with, but they did belong to the heavenly church whose qualifications for membership Jesus said was to love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus often taught in the Jewish synagogues, and some of his best friends were of the Pharisees, but the majority of them hated him.

Lincoln believed in Church organization and even while president of a war-torn country when its people demanded every minute of his time, he found time to be a regular attendant of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, not only the two services on Sunday, but also the Wednesday night prayer meeting. "Blessed be God who in this great trial giveth us the Churches." This very expressive utterance, made in response to a greeting of a company of ministers, indicates Mr. Lincoln's ardent affection for the Christian Church in all its branches, and his high appreciation of its influence for good. There are many similar declarations by Mr. Lincoln of the same import and equally clear and emphatic. And yet ardent as was his attachment to the Church, unequivocal as was his belief in its divine origin, faithful as was his attendance upon its services, liberal as were his contributions to its work, and steadfast as was his purpose to live in accordance with its requirements and teachings, Mr. Lincoln never became a Church member. There



were two things either one of which was in itself sufficient to prevent him from uniting with the Church. The first was:

Lengthy and objectionable creeds. Respecting this Hon. H. C. Deming says: "I am here reminded of an impressive remark which he made to me and which I shall never forget. He said he had never united himself with any church because he found difficulty in giving his assent without mental reservation to the long, complicated statement of Christian doctrine which characterize their articles of belief and confessions of faith. 'Whenever any church,' he said, 'will enscribe over its altar as its sole qualification for membership the Savior's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul.'"

While some church members would gladly have accepted him on the strength of this statement, the majority would have rejected him.

The following shows how the churches of Springfield, Illinois, his home town, opposed him:

Mr. Newton Bateman, Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Illinois, occupied a room (in the State Capitol) adjoining and opening into the Executive Chamber (which had been placed at Mr. Lincoln's disposal). Frequently this door was open during Mr. Lincoln's receptions; and throughout the seven months or more of his occupation, Mr. Bateman saw him nearly every day. Often when Mr. Lincoln was tired he closed his door against all intrusion, and called Mr. Bateman in his room for a quiet talk.



"On one of these occasions Mr. Lincoln took up a book containing a careful canvass of the city of Springfield in which he lived, showing the candidate for whom each citizen had declared it his intention to vote in the approaching election. Mr. Lincoln's friend had, doubtless at his own request, placed the result of this canvass in his hands. It was toward the close of October, and only a few days before the election. Calling Mr. Bateman to a seat at his side, having previously locked all the doors, he said:

"Let us look over this book. I wish particularly to see how the ministers of Springfield are going to vote."

The leaves were turned, one by one, and as the names were examined, Mr. Lincoln frequently asked if this one and that were not a minister, or an elder, or the member of such or such a church, and sadly expressed his surprise on receiving an affirmative answer. In that manner they went through the book, and then he closed it and sat silently for some minutes regarding a memorandum in pencil which lay before him. At length he turned to Mr. Bateman with a face full of sadness and said:

"Here are twenty-three ministers of different denominations and all of them are against me but three; and here are a great many prominent members of the churches, a very large majority of whom are against me. Mr. Bateman, I am not a Christian (meaning church member). God knows I would be one—but I have carefully read the Bible, and I do not so understand this book; and he drew forth from his bosom a pocket New Testament.

"These men well know,' he continued, 'that I am for freedom in the Territories, freedom everywhere as far as the Constitu-



tion and laws will permit, and that my opponents are for slavery. 'They know this, and yet, with this book in their hands, in the light of which human bondage cannot live a moment, they are going to vote against me. I do not understand it at all.'

"Here Mr. Lincoln paused—paused for long minutes—his features surcharged with emotion. Then he rose and walked up and down the room in the effort to retain or regain his self-possession. Stopping at last, he said, with a trembling voice and his cheeks wet with tears:

"I know there is a God, and that He hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that His hand is in it. If he has a place and work for me—and I think He has—I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I am right because I know that liberty is right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God. I have told them that 'a house divided against itself cannot stand,' and Christ and reason say the same; and they will find it so. Douglas don't care whether slavery is voted up or voted down, but God cares, and humanity cares, and I care; and with God's help I shall not fail. I may not see the end, but it will come, and I shall be vindicated; and these men will find that they have not read their Bibles aright."

Great credit is due those three ministers out of the twenty-three who stood true to principal. Jesus and Lincoln were great champions for the wronged and oppressed. The Publicans of Jesus' time were not necessarily ungodly men. They were hated by the Jews chiefly because they collected the tax from the Jews for the Roman government under whose rule they were. Jesus defends the publicans with this story



“Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all I possess.’ And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying: ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner.’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for ‘every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.’”

This publican was a godly man, and his humble prayer of “God be merciful to me a sinner” is the heart cry of every earnest Christian when he realizes how far short he comes to attaining Christian perfection, and whose only hope is the cleansing blood of Jesus.

A great majority of the church members of Lincoln’s time held that public entertainment could not be consistent with a godly life and so denounced that profession. We read of how Lincoln appeared in behalf of Jefferson the actor.

Where he saw injustice he was quick to offer his services to the wronged party. A pleasant example of this is related by Joseph Jefferson in his “Autobiography.” In 1839 Jefferson, then a lad of ten years, traveled through Illinois with his father’s theatrical company. After playing at Chicago, Quincy, Peoria and Pekin, the company went in the Fall to Springfield, where the sight of the Legislature tempted the elder Jefferson and his partner to remain through-



out the season. But there was no theatre. Not to be daunted they built one. But hardly had they completed it before a religious revival broke out in the town, and the church people turned all their influence against the theatre. So effectually did they work that a law was passed by the municipality imposing a license which was practically prohibitory.

"In the midst of our trouble," says Jefferson, "a young lawyer called on the managers. He had heard of the injustice, and offered, if they would place the matter in his hands, to have the license taken off, declaring that he only desired to see fair play, and he would accept no fee whether he failed or succeeded. The young lawyer began his harangue. He handled the subject with tact, skill and humor, tracing the history of the drama from the time when Thespis acted in a cart, to the stage of today. He illustrated his speech with a number of anecdotes, and kept the council in a roar of laughter. His good-humor prevailed, and the exorbitant tax was taken off.

"The young lawyer was Lincoln."

Some public entertainers, as well as some preachers, use their talents to glorify God, but those who use them otherwise will suffer the torments of Hell. There is a hell more deadly than fire and brimstone, and deeper than the bowels of the earth. That place is in the soul of sinful people. What is so low and degrading as sin? The Bible calls it a bottomless pit. There is also a heaven more beautiful than jasper walls and streets of gold and higher than to the most distant star. That place, Jesus said, is in the soul of loving people. What is so high and uplifting as love? That these two men were very humble is shown by their love and regard for little children. When moth-



ers brought their children to Jesus to be blessed of Him, His stern disciples drove them away, thinking their time was too valuable to be taken up with such petty cases, but when Jesus saw it He strongly rebuked the disciples and said: "Let the little children come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." When in New York Lincoln visited one of the charitable institutions of the city, known as the "Five Points Home of Industry," and the Superintendent of the Sabbath School there wrote this account of the event:

"One Sunday morning I saw a tall remarkable-looking man enter the room and take a seat among us. He listened with fixed attention to our exercises, and his countenance expressed such genuine interest that I approached him and suggested that he might be willing to say something to the children. He accepted the invitation with evident pleasure, and coming forward began a simple address which at once fascinated every little hearer, and hushed the room into silence. His language was strikingly beautiful and his tones musical with intense feeling. The little faces would droop into sad conviction as he uttered sentences of warning, and would brighten into sunshine as he spoke cheerful words of promise. Once or twice he attempted to close his remarks, when the imperative shouts of "Go on! Oh do go on!" would compel him to resume.

As I look upon the gaunt and sinewy frame of the stranger and marked his powerful head and determined features now touched into softness by the impression of the moment, I felt an irrepressible curiosity to learn something more about him, and while he was quietly leaving the room I



begged to know his name. He courteously replied:

“‘I’m Abraham Lincoln from Illinois.’”

We are too apt to think that these two men were more able than we to accomplish great things, because they did not have to contend with a dual nature, but not so. Whereas Lincoln and the rest of us inherit the sins of our foreparents, say to the third and fourth generation; Jesus bore the sins of the whole world in his own body; was tempted in all points the same as we, and never did a person have to struggle so hard to overcome the powers of evil; but his perfect trust in God made him complete victor over them all, and won for himself the distinction as the only begotten Son of God. “Of his death Lincoln said, “All that was lost by the fall of Adam was made good by the ‘Atonement,’ all that was lost by the fall was made good by the sacrifice.”

Lincoln was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but he was also noted for his broad smile and hearty laugh, but his Savior exceeded in these extremes, we are too prone to dwell on his sorrows and forget that it was He that said, “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad.”

It is true that they loved the whole human race; but did they have a sweetheart? Why should it be thought strange that this young Galilean, possessing ambitions and passions of a normal man, should not crave the love and special companionship of the young woman who showed Him more love and kindness than any other person? Mary called Magdalene was with Jesus at the beginning of his ministry in Galilee, accompanied him on His journeys, and came with Him to Jerusalem, where she lived with her brother and sister in Bethany, a small village within two miles of Jerusalem. Jesus



was a frequent and welcome guest at this home, and during these visits Mary would devote her time to her friend, leaving the household duties to her sister at which Martha complained and said: "Master doest thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefor that she help me." Jesus said: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Sometime after the death and resurrection of her brother Lazarus, it seems that Mary was put to a severe test, she and the disciples, no doubt, had held fond hopes that their Master was soon to take his place as king of the Jews, and that they would share with him the temporal blessings, but now their hopes were all shattered. He was rejected of his own people, branded by the Chief Priests as a common criminal worthy of death. This sentiment grew so strong in Jerusalem that Jesus and His disciples had to leave that part of the country.

God tells us in His word, that we should not marvel if we see the ministers of Satan transforming themselves into angels of righteousness. So it is quite probable that the crafty priests with their saintly look and beautiful words counseled Mary to give up the imposter who had deceived her, and she heeded, and, like Peter and Judas, turned traitor to her Lord.

There is no reason to think that her sin was of an immoral character. "Possessed of seven devils" was a term applied to those who turned away from God.

When Mary realized the mistake she had made, she, like Peter, repented of her backsliding and as Jesus (only a few days before his death) was feasting in Bethany at a



Pharisee's house, she brought a very precious box of ointment, and, not satisfied to annoint the head of Jesus, also anointed his feet, and with tears of repentance and love washed His feet, wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet. Jesus freely forgave all and in referring to her former devotion said, "She loved much," and then said, "Verily I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be told for a memorial of her."

Mary was near Jesus during His crucifixion and death, followed His dead body to the grave and returned early on that first Easter morning with spices, to again anoint His body, and stood without the grave weeping, and as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the grave and saw two angels in white sitting, the one at the head and the other at the feet of where the body of Jesus had lain, and they said unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She said unto them: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have lain him," and when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing, but knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus said unto her: "Woman why weepest thou?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener said unto Him: "Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him and I will take Him away." Jesus said unto her: "Mary!" She turned herself and said unto Him: "Rabboni!" which is to say "Master."

Mary was honored by God to be the first to see and speak to Jesus after his resurrection and the first to tell to the world the glad story of their risen Lord.

Whom could be called Jesus' dearest



earthly friend other than \*Mary, called Magdalene?

We read of Lincoln's love affair.

"It is not known precisely when Ann Rutledge told her suitor that her heart was his, but early in 1835—Lincoln was then 24 years of age—it was publicly known that they were solemnly betrothed. Even then the scrupulous maiden waited for the return of the absent McNamar, that she might be formerly released from the obligation to him which he had recklessly forfeited. Her friends argued with her that she was carrying her scruples too far, and at last, as neither man nor letter came, she permitted it to be understood that she would marry Abraham Lincoln as soon as his legal studies should be completed.

"That was a glorious summer for him; the brightest, sweetest, hopefulest he yet had known. It was also the fairest time he was ever to see; for even now, as the golden days came and went, they brought an increasing shadow on their wings. It was a shadow that was not to pass away. Little by little came indications that the health of Ann Rutledge had suffered under the prolonged strain to which she has been subjected. Her sensitive nature had been strung to too high a tension and the cords of her life were beginning to give way.

"There were those of her friends who said that she died of a broken heart, but the doctors called it "brain fever."

"On the 25th of August, 1835, just before the summer died, she passed away from earth. But she never faded from the heart

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\*For further evidence as regards the identity of Martha and Mary called Magdalene, send 15c in stamps to E. Rudeen, Y. M. C. A., Los Angeles, Calif.



of Abraham Lincoln. . . . In her early grave was buried the best hope he ever knew, and the shadow of the great darkness was never lifted entirely from him .

A few days before Ann's death a message from her brought her betrothed to her bedside, and they were left alone. No one ever knew what passed between them in the endless moments of that last sad farewell; but Lincoln left the house with inexpressible agony written upon his face. He had been to that moment a man of marvelous poise and self-control, but the pain he now struggled with grew deeper and more deep, until, when they came and told him she was dead, his heart and will, and even his brain itself, gave way. He was utterly without help or the hope of possible help in this world or beyond it. He was frantic for a time, seeming even to lose the sense of his own identity, and all New Salem said that he was insane. He piteously moaned and raved:

"I never can be reconciled to have the snow, rain and storms beat upon her grave."

"His best friends seemed to have lost their influence over him, all but one; for Bowling Green . . . managed to entice the poor fellow to his own home a short distance from the village, there to keep watch and ward over him until the fury of his sorrow should wear away. There were well grounded fears lest he might do himself some injury, and the watch was vigilantly kept.

"In a few weeks reason again obtained the mastery, and it was safe to let him return to his studies and his work. He could indeed work again, and he could once more study law, for there was a kind of relief in steady occupation and absorbing toil, but he was not, could not ever be, the same man.



“Lincoln had been fond of poetry from boyhood, and had gradually made himself familiar with large parts of Shakespeare’s plays and the works of other great writers. He now discovered in a strange collection of verses, the one poem which seemed best to express the morbid, troubled, sore condition of his mind, . . . the lines by William Knox, beginning:

‘Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?’

“With all his love of fun and frolic, with all his wit and humor, with all his laughter and anecdotes, Lincoln, from his youth, was a person of deep feeling, and there was always mingled with his mirth, sadness and melancholy. He always associated with the memory of Ann Rutledge the plaintive poem which in his hours of melancholy he so often repeated, and whose familiar first stanzas are as follows:

‘Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

Like a swift fleeting meteor, a fast flying cloud,

A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,

He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,

Be scattered around, and together be laid,

And the young and the old, and the low and high

Shall moulder to dust and together shall lie.’

“Lincoln loved at twilight, or when in the country, or in solitude, or when with some confidential friend, to repeat this



poem. I think he exaggerated its merits, and I attribute his great love of the poem to its association with Ann Rutledge. Several years passed after the sad death of Ann Rutledge before he married. It is not impossible that his devotion to her memory may have been, in part, the cause of so long a delay."

In his thirty-fourth year he married Miss Mary Todd, a very beautiful, refined and highly cultured young lady, a former sweetheart of Judge Stephen A. Douglas, the champion of the pro-slavery cause, an opponent to Lincoln in the celebrated joint debates who also ran against him for the Presidency of the United States, but who later became one of Lincoln's staunchest friends. Lincoln greatly admired this young lady who was determined to become his wife, but as he compared his humble life with that of hers of culture and her love for pomp and show, he tried to have her understand that he would not be able to make her happy, which for a time proved to be true. During their early married life they lived at a boarding house paying the modest sum of four dollars per week for the two. Because he could not provide the luxuries her heart so long and craved for she would often say that she had married beneath her. They say that the lesson that the Bible so clearly teaches that a wife should be in subjection to her husband, was as hard for her at first to learn as it is for some husbands to learn what the Bible teaches that the husband shall love his wife even as Christ loved the Church.

The religion of Christ has done more for women than anything else in granting to them equal rights with men as regards to life, liberty and the pursuits of happiness. These are the privileges Lincoln referred to



when he said, "I go for all sharing the privileges of government, who assist in bearing its burdens, by no means excluding women." Jesus and Lincoln taught both by word and deed, what the true relationship between master and servant should be. Jesus said, "Whosoever among you will be chieft, shall be servant of all." This he demonstrated when He, as Master, washed His disciples feet. Lincoln at the age of twenty-three was a candidate for the Illinois State Legislature. At that time he published a circular which concluded as follows: "Every man is said to have his peculiar ambition. Whether that is true or not, I can say for one, that I have no other so great as that of being truly esteemed of my fellow-men by rendering myself worthy of their esteem. How far I shall succeed in this is yet to be developed. I am young and unknown to many of you; I was born and have remained in the most humble walks of life. I have no wealthy relations or friends to recommend me; my case is thrown exclusively upon the independent voters of the country, and, if elected, they will have conferred a favor upon me for the which I shall be unremitting in my labors to compensate. But, if the good people in their wisdom see fit to keep me in the background, I have been too familiar with disappointment to be very much chagrined." This same spirit remained with him throughout life. Even when he became the chief executive of the nation he proved himself a servant of the people. The saying that is so common among dishonest people, "A man cannot be honest and succeed in business" was proven false by the life of Lincoln. He chose for his business in life the practice of law, which offers the greatest opportunity for dishonest gain. Although for years his struggle with



poverty was painful, indeed, and he could have, by sacrificing principle enjoyed the luxuries of life, he was always honest and reached the highest position and honor. Although his weekly salary was only \$961.60, yet his home was the most coveted mansion on earth. He also proved that a man does not have to indulge in vice in order to hold the esteem of his fellow-men. The following reveals his temperate life:

"Lincoln set out for Washington from Ramsdell's Tavern in Springfield early in the morning. The only other passenger in the stage for a good portion of the distance was a Kentuckian, on his way home from Missouri. Painfully impressed, no doubt, with Lincoln's gravity and melancholy, he undertook to relieve the general monotony of the ride by offering him a chew of tobacco. With a plain,

"No, sir, thank you; I never chew," Lincoln declined, and a long period of silence followed.

"Later in the day the stranger, pulling from his pocket a leather-covered case, offered Lincoln a cigar, which he also politely declined on the ground that he never smoked.

"Finally, as they neared the station where the horses were to be changed, the Kentuckian, pouring out a cup of brandy from a flask which had lain concealed in his satchel, offered it to Lincoln with the remark,

"'Well, stranger, seeing you don't smoke or chew, perhaps you'll take a little of this French brandy. It's a fine article and a good appetizer besides.'"

"His tall and uncommunicative companion declined this last and best evidence of Kentucky hospitality on the same ground as the tobacco. When they separated that afternoon, the Kentuckian, transferring to an-



other stage, bound for Louisville, shook Lincoln warmly by the hand. 'See here, stranger,' he said, good-naturedly, 'you're a clever, but strange companion. I may never see you again, and I don't want to offend you, but I want to say this: My experience has taught me that a man who has no vices has blamed few virtues. Good-day.'

"Lincoln enjoyed this reminiscence of the journey, and took great pleasure in relating it."

Jesus and Lincoln were great conquerors, using for their chief weapon the sword of the spirit which is love and mercy, and only used the metal sword as the last resort in defense of the principles of truth. They loved peace and hated war more than any one else. Yet Lincoln was chief dictator in one of the most cruel wars the world has ever seen. But it did not begin until the enemy had first struck with the sword. Then Lincoln only obeyed the command of his Master, where He says: "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Jesus said in reference to wrong doers, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I am come not to send peace but a sword." The Bible says that Jesus at times looked on wrong doers in anger and said hard and cutting words to them, and used violent means to drive them from the temple. We read of Lincoln driving wrong doers from the voting place.

"The exciting canvass of 1840 had come to a final issue at the polls. On the line of railway then in construction near by, there was a large gang of laborers, mostly of the 'alien' class, whose right to vote had been denied, but sustained by the new Supreme Court organized under the 'Douglas bill. The contractor who employed them was an ardent Democrat, and on election day it



came to the ears of Lincoln that he had marched up his battalion of voters and taken possession of one of the polling places. It was not a question now of whether these men should be allowed to vote; but that they should refuse honest voters access to the ballot-box was not to be borne with resignation. With true Berserker rage he hurried to the scene, faced the offenders, and without need of blows—drove back the riotous crowd. From the statements of Mr. Speed, who gave the substance of this account from his own knowledge, it appears that Lincoln started, cudgel in hand, under an impulse to clear the way to the polls by force."

They were great forgivers. Jesus chose for his chief apostle St. Paul, who had been the greatest persecutor of the Christian faith. Lincoln said, "A man has no time to spend in quarrels. If any man ceases to attack me, I never remember the past against him." When he became President and was to choose men to fill the most important offices of the nation, he chose some of the men who had opposed him the most.

Lincoln had an experience similar to that of Jesus while in the garden of Gethsemane. We read in the Bible, that on the night of His betrayal, Jesus and His disciples went to the garden of Gethsemane and He said unto them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and he withdrew himself from His disciples a short distance, and fell on His face and prayed saying, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me, nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done." He was not trying to shirk the cross, but He prayed that His awful load of sorrow might be lightened, and God in His mercy heard His prayer and sent an angel to strengthen Him. Lincoln had his



Gethsemane the night after the battle of Chancellorsville. • We read,

"Did he ever at any time reel or stagger under his burden? Oh, yes, once. He could feel a hit or a stab at any time; but the things which hurt him, that made him suffer, that were slowly killing him, as he himself declared, did not interfere with the perpetual efficiency of his work. If there were hours when despondency came and when he doubted the result, . . . he did not tell anybody; but there was one night when his wrestle with despair was long and terrible.

"In the opinion of Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of the Army, concurred in by other good judges, the darkest hour of the Civil War came in the first week of May, 1863. The Army of the Potomac, under General Hooker, had fought the bloody battle of Chancellorsville. The record of their dead and wounded told how bravely they had fought, but they were defeated, losing the field of battle, and seventeen thousand men.

"The country was weary of the long War, with its draining taxes of gold and blood. Discontent was everywhere raising its head, and the opponents of the Lincoln Administration were savage in their denunciations. Many of his severest critics were men of unquestioned patriotism. The mail desk in the Secretary's office at the White House was heaped with letters, as if the President could read them. He knew their purport well enough without reading. He knew of the forever vacant places in the hundred thousand households before Chancellorsville. If more than a third of each day's mail already consisted of measureless denunciation; if another large part was made up of piteous pleas for peace, for a termina-



tion of the long murder of the Civil War, what would it be when tidings of this last slaughter should go out and send back echoes from the heart-stricken multitude? Had not enough been endured, and was there not imminent peril, that the country would refuse to endure any more? This question was, perhaps, the darkest element in the problem presented to Mr. Lincoln.

"There were callers at the White House on the day on which the news of the defeat was brought; but they were not the customary throng. Members of the Senate and House came, with gloomy faces; the members of the Cabinet came to consult or to condole with the President.

"There were Army and Navy officers, but only such as were sent for. The house was as if a funeral were going forward, and those who entered or felt it trod softly, as people always do around a coffin, for fear they may wake the dead.

"That night, the last visitors in Lincoln's room were Stanton and Halleck. They went away together in silence, at somewhere near nine o'clock, and the President was left alone. Not another soul was on that floor except the one secretary, who was busy with the mail in his room across the hall from the President's; and the doors of both rooms were ajar, for the night was warm. The silence was so deep that the ticking of a clock would have been noticeable; but another sound came and that was almost as regular and ceaseless.

"It was the tread of the President's feet as he strode slowly back and forth across the chamber in which so many Presidents of the United States had done their work. Was he to be the last of the line? The last President of the entire United States? At that hour that very question had been asked



of him by the battle of Chancellorsville. If he had wavered, if he had failed in faith or courage or prompt decision, then the nation and not the Army of the Potomac would have lost its great battle.

"Ten o'clock came, without a break in the steady march. Eleven o'clock came and then another hour of that ceaseless march so accustomed the ear to it that when, a little after twelve, there was a break of several minutes, the sudden silence made one put down his letters and listen.

"The President may have been at his table writing, or he may—no one knows or can guess; but at the end of the minutes, long or short, the tramp began again. Two o'clock, and he was walking yet, and when a little after three, the secretary's task was done and he slipped noiselessly out, he turned at the head of the stairs for a moment. It was so—the last sound he heard as he went down was the footfall in Lincoln's room.

"The young man had to return early, and he was there again before eight o'clock. The President's room door was open and he went in. There sat Mr. Lincoln eating breakfast alone. He had not been out of his room; but there was a kind of cheery, hopeful, morning light on his face instead the funeral battle-cloud of Chancellorsville. He had watched all night, but a dawn had come, for beside his cup of coffee lay the written draft of his instructions to General Hooker to push forward, to fight again. There was a decisive battle won that night in that long vigil with disaster and despair. Only a few weeks later the Army of the Potomac fought it over again as desperately—and they won it—at Gettysburg."

The following reveals the secret of his great power: An officer of the Civil War



bags to give a significant conversation of Lincoln's in his presence in July, 1863, in Washington, D. C., on the Sunday after the Battle of Gettysburg. General Sickles of New York had lost a leg on the second day at Gettysburg, while in command of the Third Corps, and arrived in Washington on the Sunday following (July 5th). As a member of his staff I called to see him, and while there Mr. Lincoln also called, with his son, Tad, and remained an hour or more. He greeted Sickles very heartily and kindly, of course, and complimented him on his stout fight at Gettysburg, and then, after inquiring about our killed and wounded generally, passed on to the question as to what Meade was going to do with his victory. They discussed this pro and con at some length, Lincoln hoping for great results if Meade only pressed Lee actively, but Sickles was dubious and diplomatic, as became so astute a man. And then, presently, General Sickles turned to him, and asked what he thought during the Gettysburg campaign, and whether he was not anxious about it?

"Mr. Lincoln gravely replied, no, he was not; that some of his Cabinet and many others in Washington were, but that he himself had had no fears. General Sickles inquired how this was, and seemed curious about it. Mr. Lincoln hesitated, but finally replied:

"Well, I will tell you how it was. In the pinch of your campaign up there, when everybody seemed panic-stricken, and nobody could tell what was going to happen, oppressed by the gravity of our affairs, I went to my room one day and locked the door, and got down on my knees before Almighty God, and prayed to Him mightily for victory at Gettysburg. I told Him this was His war, and our cause His cause, but that we couldn't stand another Fredericks-



burg or Chancellorsville. And I then and there made a solemn vow to Almighty God that if He would stand by our boys at Gettysburg I would stand by Him. And He did and I will. And after that—I don't know how it was and I can't explain it—but soon a sweet comfort swept into my soul that things would go all right at Gettysburg, and that is why I had no fears about you.'"

"He said this solemnly and pathetically, as if from the very depths of his heart, and both Sickles and I were deeply touched by his manner.

"Presently General Sickles asked him what news he had from Vicksburg. He answered, he had none worth mentioning, but that Grant was still "pegging away" down there, and he thought a good deal of him as a general and wasn't going to remove him, though urged to do so.

"Besides," he added, "I have been praying over Vicksburg also, and believe our Heavenly Father is going to give us victory there too, because we need it, in order to bisect the Confederacy and have the Mississippi flow unvexed to the sea.'"

"Of course, he did not know that Vicksburg had already fallen, July 4th, and that a gunboat was soon to arrive at Cairo with the great news that was to make that Fourth of July memorable in history forever."

We also read of their triumphal entry. Once when Jesus entered Jerusalem He was received as a King, for a great multitude spread their garments in the way. "Others cut down branches from the trees and strewed them in the way, and the multitude that went before and that followed, cried, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest." We



read of Lincoln's strange triumphal entry into Richmond, Virginia, the conquered capital of the Southern Confederacy:

"There was a small house on the landing, and behind it were some twelve negroes digging with spades. Their leader was an old man . . . He raised himself to an upright position as we landed and put his hands up to his eyes. Then he dropped his spade and sprang forward.

"Bress de Lord," he said, "dere is de great Messiah! I knowed him as soon as I seed him. He's been in my heart fo' long yeahs, an' he's come at las' to free his chillun from deir bondage—Glory, Hallelujah!" And he fell on his knees before the President and kissed his feet. The others followed his example, and in a minute Mr. Lincoln was surrounded by these people, who had treasured up the recollection of him caught from a photograph, and had looked up to him for four years as the one who was to lead them out of captivity.

"Mr. Lincoln looked down at the poor creatures at his feet; he was much embarrassed at his position.

"Don't kneel to me," he said, "That is not right. You must kneel to God only, and thank Him for the liberty you will hereafter enjoy.

"His face was lit up with a divine look as he said these words. In his enthusiasm he seemed the personification of manly beauty, and that sad face of his looked down in kindness upon those ignorant blacks. He really seemed of another world.

"It was a minute or two before I could get the negroes to rise and leave the President."

"'Yes, Massa,' said the old man . . . 'Scuseus, sir. We means no disrespec' to Mass' Lincoln; we means all love and grati-



tude.' And then joining hands together in a ring, they sang a hymn, beginning, 'O, all ye people, clap your hands!'

"The President and all of us listened respectfully. Four minutes at most had passed away since we first landed, when the streets were entirely deserted. . . Now the streets seemed to be suddenly alive with the colored race. They seemed to spring from the earth. They came tumbling and shouting from over the hill and from the water-side, where no one was seen as we had passed.

"The crowd immediately became very oppressive. We needed the Marines to keep them off. I ordered twelve of the boat's crew to fix bayonets to their rifles and to surround the President, all of which was quickly done; but the crowd poured in so fearfully that I thought we all stood a chance of being crushed to death.

"I now realize the imprudence of landing without a large body of Marines; and yet, this seemed to me, after all, the fittest way for Mr. Lincoln to come among the people he had redeemed from bondage.

"What an ovation he had, to be sure! . . . They all had their souls in their eyes, and I don't think I ever looked upon a scene where there were so many passionately happy faces.

"At length the President spoke. He could not move for the mass of people—he had to do something.

"‘My poor friends,’ he said. ‘You are free—free as air. You can cast off the name of slave and trample upon it; it will come to you no more. Liberty is your birthright. God gave it to you as he gave it to others, and it is a sin that you have been deprived of it for so many years. But you must try to deserve this priceless boon. Let the world see that you merit it, and are able to



maintain it by your good works. Don't let your joy carry you into excesses. Learn the laws and obey them; obey God's commandments and thank Him for giving you liberty, for to Him you owe all things. There, now, let me pass on. I have but little time to spare. I want to see the Capitol, and must return at once to Washington to secure you that liberty which you seem to prize so highly.' "

Strange as it may seem Lincoln entered the Nation's Capital this time on Palm Sunday, and the next Friday he made the supreme sacrifice, but during these five days he experienced the happiest moments of his life. The burden of war had been lifted, and with great hopes for the future he said: "If God gives me four years more to rule this country, I believe it will become what it ought to be, what its Divine Author intended it to be; no more a vast plantation for breeding human beings for the purpose of lust and bondage, but it will become a new valley of Jehosaphat, where all nations of the earth will assemble together under one flag, worshipping a common God, and they will celebrate the resurrection of human freedom.

When they had finished their work on earth, God called them to their glorious reward. Hypocrites said of the death of Jesus, "Cursed is everyone that dieth on a cross." They also said of the death of Lincoln, "Cursed is everyone who dieth in a theatre. Lincoln was murdered by bloodthirsty men who said they were doing God's will. The actual murderers were not the men who nailed Jesus to the cross or fired the fatal shot at Lincoln but the people who instigated the crimes. Lincoln's murder took place on **Good Friday**, 1865, the anniversary of the murder of Jesus his Savior.



But these two martyrs live in the hearts of the people more today than when they were as men on earth. The time is coming, according to the Bible, when people like Lincoln, filled with the spirit of Christ, shall govern this world, and it might be well said, as of old, through **Abraham** (Lincoln) shall all nations be blessed, and Jesus be crowned King and Lord of Lords.

E. F. RUDEEN.

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